

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A container according to Claim 12[[6]], characterized in that the male element (12) comprises a pair of substantially parallel, resilient prongs (22) separated by a slot (32), wherein the female element comprises a guide rib (34) which can be inserted in the slot (32) between the prongs, and wherein the female element comprises projecting engagement means (36, 38) which can cooperate with the anchoring ends (22a, 22b) of the prongs (22) to prevent removal of the male element (12) from the female element (16).

8. (Currently Amended) A container according to claim 12[[1]], characterized in that it comprises means for facilitating the opening of the container, comprising a flexible tab (42) connected to the periphery of the mouth of one of the half-shells (4), the other half shell (2) being capable of being superimposed on the end of the tab in the region of its connection to the respective half-shell, in the closed configuration of the container.

9. (Currently Amended) A container according to claim 12[[1]], further comprising a heat-shrinkable band (52) surrounding the connection region between the two half-shells.

10. (Currently Amended) A package comprising a hollow body including in its interior a container (1) according to claim 12[[1]].

11. (Original) A package-according to Claim 10, characterized in that the hollow body is a chocolate egg.

12. (New) A container for gifts, comprising:

a first half-shell and

a second half-shell,

said first and second half-shells comprising:

first connection means suitable to promote a firm connection of the two half-shells in a mouth-to-mouth relationship to form a closed container suitable for holding gifts, said first connection means providing a form-fit or snap engagement between said first half-shell and second half-shell and being releasable by the user,

second connection means being associated with each of the half-shells and being susceptible to be mutually engaged in order to keep the two half-shells connected to one another, when said first connection means are disengaged, said second connection means comprising buckle-like connection means comprising

a male element integral with said first half-shell connected to said first half-shell by articulation means and

a female element integral with said second half-shell,

wherein said articulation means, in the configuration of a mutual engagement of said second connection means permitting an opening

pivoting movement of one half-shell relative to the other half-shell,
wherein said second connection means connect the two half-shells to one another in a manner such as to permit a limited movement of one half-shell relative to the other in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the mouth of the two half-shells, said male element having a generally anchor-shaped configuration with resilient anchoring ends and comprising a pair of substantially parallel, resilient prongs separated by a slot and

wherein said female element is formed by a bridge-like wall defining an open-ended slot in which the male element can be inserted and wherein said anchoring ends can engage the sidewalls delimiting the open-ended slot,

said female element comprising a guide rib which can be inserted in said slot between the prongs and wherein the female element comprises projecting engagement means which can cooperate with said anchoring ends of said prongs to prevent removal of the male element from the female element.

13. (New) A container according to claim 12, said first connection means comprising an engagement rib on one of said half-shells and an collar on the other of said half-shells, wherein the movement of the second connection means in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the mouth of the two half-shells corresponds to the depth of said collar.